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FIG. 1. TEMPLE-RELIEF
PYRAMID OF AMENEMHAT I

THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION

III

THE PYRAMID OF AMENEMHAT



FIG. 2. FOUNDATION DEPOSIT OF TEMPLE
OF AMENEMHAT

THE general scope of the present season's work on the pyramid of Amenemhat I. has been already outlined in the May BULLETIN. The north side of the pyramid was chosen as the scene of operations for two reasons, first, in order to lay bare the entrance to the pyramid itself, and secondly, because it was

hoped that in this region, as in the case of contemporary pyramids at Dahshur, the tombs of members of the King's family might be brought to light. A new railway track was accordingly laid running out due north from the pyramid, and connecting with the valley which had been used as a dumping ground throughout the work of last season. On November 1, a beginning was made on the surface accumulation at the northeast corner and the excavation was continued from then until the end of March, with a force varying from three hundred to one hundred men as the work necessitated.

As in the case of the east face, the clearing of the XII dynasty structures was greatly complicated by the presence of later house walls and silos, built partly on the lower slopes of the pyramid itself, and covering all the ground in its immediate proximity. The houses on this side of the pyramid, however, were in a much better state of preservation than those on the east, and from the objects found in them it was possible to date them to a period earlier than was at first supposed—the XXII and immediately succeeding dynasties. This throws a striking light on the amount of damage which Egyptian monu-

ments suffered in ancient times, for within a thousand years of Amenemhat's death we find his pyramid, thrown into absolute ruin, forming the site of a flourishing village. The houses of which the village

was a cache, which consisted of a large pot in which had been carefully packed away nine copper bowls and a bronze axe-head (fig. 6).

In close proximity to the houses, and



FIG. 3. ENTRANCE TO PYRAMID OF AMENEMHAT, WITH GRANITE "FALSE DOOR" AND REMAINS OF PAVEMENT

was composed were all of crude brick and in some cases are sufficiently well preserved to admit of a definite plan, one showing remains of an arched roofing and of a staircase. Scattered through and over the house walls there were a number of interesting small objects—flint implements of all kinds, weights, spinning-whorls, scarabs, and rings, quantities of beads and a great number of fragments of finely colored glass. These two latter classes of objects seem to have formed the chief industry of the village, for in certain spots there were accumulations of slag from glass fusing, while lumps of crude amethyst, garnet, etc., were found in large quantities all over the site. Buried under the floor of one of the houses there

possibly in connection with them, there were more of the silos (beehive-shaped structures of crude brick) of which so many were found on the east side; but whereas those of last year were for the most part empty, or contained mere house remains—grain, firewood, etc.—our present examples afforded a good deal of interesting material. Many were full of pottery, a hundred jars or more being placed in one silo, and each jar containing a quantity of little bundles of dried lizards. In another in addition to the jars of lizards there were a number of iguanas, each wrapped separately and piled at full length one on top of the other. Two or three silos contained the bones of larger animals, while in three examples there were human burials (fig. 5).

This late level of occupation was laid bare from the northeast corner of the pyramid to the entrance passage in the middle of the north face, and then, after a complete photographic record had been

had quarried extensively among earlier tombs, possibly in Medum or Dahshur. A good deal of the pavement in front of the north base of the pyramid was still preserved, and one of the blocks found in

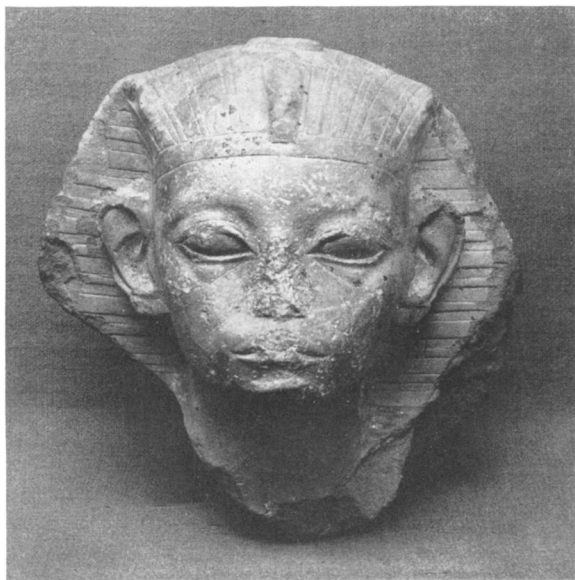


FIG. 4. HEAD OF STATUETTE OF A XIIITH DYNASTY KING (AMENEMHAT III.?). SCALE 1:4

taken and plans and elevations of all the houses made, the walls were destroyed and the work of clearing went on down to the older level. The space between the two levels—about a meter and a half—was filled for the most part with fallen blocks from the pyramid, and in clearing these it was discovered that the pyramid, which has served as a quarry to the inhabitants of the surrounding country for so many centuries, was itself constructed with stone plundered from earlier buildings. The stones below house level were those which had been thrown out from the inner filling of the pyramid, yet many of them were inscribed with boat scenes and the like, in a style which showed clearly that they had originally belonged to Old Kingdom Mastabas; and it was clear that Amenemhat in constructing his pyramid

this pavement was inscribed with the name of an Old Kingdom official, Khufu-Sekhtet.

The clearing away of the lower level of débris laid bare the entrance passage to the pyramid. This was lined with granite, while the passage itself, after the burial had been placed in position, had been blocked throughout its whole length with a succession of granite monoliths exactly fitting the width of the passage. The plunderers, avoiding this regular entrance, had cut a passage for themselves to the west of it in the softer limestone bedrock, and this plunderers' passage still forms a fairly easy means of ingress to the upper chamber of the pyramid. This chamber, a room 2.63 meters long by 1.14 meters wide by 1.45 meters high, was also lined with granite, and in the middle of its floor there

was a shaft, 75 centimeters square, descending vertically a depth of about eleven meters, and presumably connecting with the actual burial chamber. The progress of the work in this direction has been

down from the temple to the cultivation was traced for a considerable distance to the east, resulting in the discovery of several colored pieces of relief sculpture; a complex of walls—apparently construction

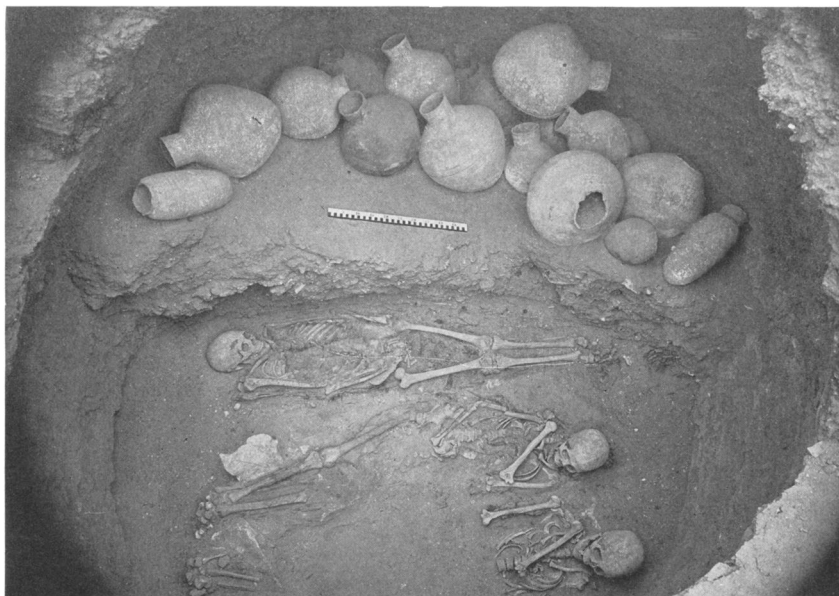


FIG. 5. HUMAN BURIALS AND LIZARD JARS IN A SILO

temporarily checked here owing to the presence of water in the shaft as mentioned in a previous report.

In front of the entrance to the pyramid there was a colossal "false door" in red granite 3.86 meters high (fig. 3), inscribed with the names and titles of Amenemhat. This must have been the offering stela which Amenemhat originally intended should be set up in the temple in connection with the granite altar, but from its present position and a reworking of its under side it was obviously taken over for use in the completion of the passage construction, and the smaller limestone "false door" found in the work of last year substituted in its place in the temple.

In addition to the work on the north face of the pyramid a good deal of further clearing was carried on at the same time on the east side. The sloping causeway which led

chambers for leveling the ground—was laid bare to the south of the causeway; several deep tomb-shafts were opened, one of which produced a finely executed head of a statue of a XIIth dynasty king, probably Amenemhat III (fig. 4), and a stela dedicated to a prince named Hapu (XXth dynasty?): and another finely colored block of relief, representing a vulture and hawk with outstretched wings, was discovered, reused as a foundation for the wall behind the granite altar. At the southeast corner of the temple four other large blocks of the temple-relief of Amenemhat have also been found, reused in a similar way. One of these is shown in fig. 1. A search for the "Foundation Deposits" of the temple has up to the present resulted in the recovery of two, one in an axis of the temple near its west end (fig. 2), and the other under the north -

east corner. These contained an interesting series of model vases and bricks, sandstone paint-grinders, and tiny alabaster vases.

Further work on the cemetery of private tombs west of the pyramid was also carried on during the earlier part of the season by Mr. Winlock. In addition to excavating a considerable number of new tomb-shafts, a large mastaba discovered last year was completely cleared and its plan recovered so far as possible. The mastaba proper was of limestone, with an interior colonnaded hall, and, from inscribed blocks and the torso

of a gray granite statue found in it, proves to have belonged to a XIIth dynasty official named Usertesén. The shaft, near the center of the tomb, descended to a depth of seventy feet and connected with a series of large underground chambers. Surrounding the tomb proper was an enclosure wall

of mud brick, of which the outer side was elaborately paneled and faced with a fine white plaster. Outside this wall was a wide gutter for carrying off water, which emptied itself by means of stone drains, two of which, in the middle of

the north and west sides respectively, were still in place. The space between the enclosure wall and the main structure was occupied with smaller tomb-shafts — probably the tombs of relations or retainers of the owner of the mastaba — and it was one of these shafts that contained the fine untouched burial found last year.

Among the objects found in this work on the cemetery were a number of animal figures in faience, a faience mace-head, alabaster toilet-vases, necklaces and other ornaments, and a gold pendant charm-case of most exquisite workmanship.

A. C. M.

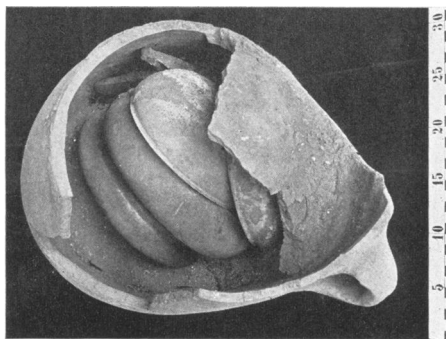


FIG. 6. COPPER BOWLS BURIED UNDER THE FLOOR OF A HOUSE

